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for energy consumers

Switching Programme Information Note
Standstill Period

Background

1. The aim of the Switching Programme is to facilitate reliable, faster and cost efficient switching for consumers. The 'reliable' objective is underpinned by accurate and timely data being available to the relevant actors to ensure a customer's switch is completed successfully.
2. In developing the approach to the new switching arrangements a risk was identified where, should a consumer systematically switched within short periods (days), then there would not be adequate time for all the data exchanges for the first switch to be completed before the next switch take place.
3. Should this scenario arise it may lead to errors in opening and closing bills, difficulties in setting up new customer accounts, as meter information has not been shared between meter operators and or suppliers incurring additional costs to rectify data errors.
4. To mitigate these risks the new switching arrangements will include a Standstill Period.

Standstill Period

5. The Standstill Period (SP) will be a short configurable period of time that will be an attribute of the Central Switching Service (CSS). The SP will be applicable to both gas and electricity switches and domestic and non-domestic consumers.
6. The logical design has assumed a maximum value of 10 days with the ability for this value to be adjusted via appropriate governance.
7. The Programme will determine the value of the SP during the Design, Build and Test Phase as this will allow for the output of the testing phase to inform SP value that should be in effect at Go-Live.
8. It is the objective of the Programme that the Standstill Period will eventually be set to zero (effectively no Standstill period) to underpin the fastest possible switching timeframe for the consumer.

Operation of the SP

9. The CSS will log the date when new registrations take effect. Assuming a 5-day standstill period, a new switch request with an effective date 5 days or less than the previous switch effective date will be rejected.
10. A rejection notification will be issued to the gaining supplier who will then inform the customer that an alternative switch date will be required.
11. The SP will be suppressed if a switch request is the outcome of a resolution to a previous erroneous switch.
12. This approach will be applicable for a customer that chooses to cool-off also.
13. The CSS will be required to monitor and report on the operation of the SP and any changes to the SP will be subject to REC governance during live operations.

Further information

More details can be found here